

Message Text

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43

ACTION EB-11

INFO OCT-01 EA-11 ISO-00 SPC-03 AID-20 NSC-10 RSC-01

CIEP-02 TRSE-00 SS-20 STR-08 OMB-01 CEA-02 CIAE-00

COME-00 FRB-02 INR-10 NSAE-00 XMB-07 OPIC-12 LAB-06

SIL-01 GSA-02 INT-08 SCEM-02 DRC-01 /141 W

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R 291005Z NOV 73

FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8468

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: ETRD EGEN PFOR ID MY SN TH JA

SUBJ: ASEAN-JAPAN MINISTERIAL MEETING ON SYNTHETIC RUBBER

REF: JAKARTA 11487 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY: ASEAN DELEGATION UNDER INDONESIAN FONMIN MALIK (CHAIRMAN, STANDING COMMITTEE, ASEAN) MET WITH JAPANESE OFFICIALS LED BY FONMIN OHIRA IN TOKYO NOV 27 TO DISCUSS ALLEGED THREAT POSED TO ECONOMIES OF ASEAN COUNTRIES BY JAPANESE PRODUCTION AND EXPORT OF SYNTHETIC RUBBER. TALKS RESULTED IN AGREEMENT TO ESTABLISH FORUM FOR DISCUSSION OF SYNTHETIC RUBBER PROBLEM BETWEEN JAPAN AND ASEAN AT GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS/EXPERT LEVEL, WITH FIRST MEETING TO BE HELD NO LATER THAN FEBRUARY 1974. END SUMMARY.

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1. ON NOV 28 EMBOFF REVIEWED RESULTS OF NOV 27

ASEAN-JAPAN MINISTERIAL MEETING WITH TAKANO, DEPUTY HEAD, REGIONAL POLICY DIVISION, ASEAN AFFAIRS BUREAU, FONOFF. HE PROVIDED FOLLOWING ACCOUNT:

A) ASEAN HAD ORIGINALLY REQUESTED MINISTERIAL MEETING BE HELD IN JAKARTA. HOWEVER, WHEN GOJ EXPLAINED THAT THIS DIFFICULT AS FONMIN OHIRA QUITE BUSY, FONMIN MALIK AGREED COME TO TOKYO. HE WAS ACCCOMPANIED BY VARIOUS ASEAN OFFICIALS AND BY DEPUTY SECRETARY OF SINGAPORE FONOFF. AMBASSADORS IN TOKYO OF ASEAN COUNTRIES ALSO ATTENDED MINISTERIAL SESSION. ON JAPANESE SIDE, FONOFF DIRECTOR GENERAL OF ASIAN AFFAIRS BUREAU (TAKASHIMA) AND VARIOUS DIVISION CHIEFS FROM FONOFF AND MINISTRY OF INTERNATIONAL TRADE AND INDUSTRY PARTICIPATED IN TALKS.

B) MINISTERIAL SESSION ITSELF LASTED ONLY THIRTY MINUTES, AND CONSISTED OF WELCOME BY OHIRA AND STATEMENTS BY BOTH OHIRA AND MALIK. MALIK POINTED OUT THAT JAPANESE PRODUCTION AND EXPORT OF SYNTHETIC RUBBER COULD BE VERY HARMFUL TO ASEAN ECONOMIES; IT NECESSARY FOR JAPAN TO BUY MORE NATURAL RUBBER FROM ASEAN COUNTRIES; JAPAN SHOULD REFRAIN FROM INCREASED INVESTMENT IN SYNTHETIC RUBBER INDUSTRY; INCREASED JAPANESE PRODUCTION OF PARTICULAR KIND OF SYNTHETIC RUBBER DIRECTLY COMPETITIVE WITH NATURAL RUBBER (IR OR POLYISOPRENE) WOULD BE QUOTE DANGEROUS UNQUOTE TO ASEAN ECONOMIES.

C) OHIRA REPLIED BY EXPLAINING THAT JAPAN ATTACHES IMPORTANCE TO ITS RELATIONS WITH ASIAN COUNTRIES IN GENERAL AND ASEAN IN PARTICULAR, EMPHASIZING SIGNIFICANCE OF ASEAN, AND NOTING DESIRABILITY AND IMPORTANCE OF HAVING DIALOGUE ON THIS PROBLEM. HE CONTINUED THAT DUE TO OIL CRISIS, IT INCONCEIVABLE THAT JAPAN WILL INCREASE SYNTHETIC RUBBER PRODUCTION OR EXPORTS, AND THAT JAPAN FEELS ITS INDUSTRY POSES NO DANGER TO ASEAN NATURAL RUBBER. HE EMPHASIZED THAT JAPAN FULLY UNDERSTANDS ASEAN'S GREAST CONCERN AND WILL FULLY TAKE THIS INTO ACCOUNT. HE CONCLUDED BY SAYING JAPAN IS WILLING TO HAVE FORUM FOR DIALOGUE ON THIS QUESTION AT GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS/EXPERTS LEVEL.

D) FOLLOWING BRIEF MINISTERPKL MEETPEG WORKING LEVEL OFFICIALS DRAFTED PRESS RELEASE AND REPORT OF MEETING WHICH WERE THEN CONFIDENTIAL

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APPROVED BY OHIRA AND MALIK.

2. TAKANO NOTED THAT FROM THE BEGINNING, MALAYSIA HAD BEEN LEADER OF DRIVE AGAINST JAPANESE SYNTHETIC RUBBER. ACCORDINGLY, IT NOT CORRECT TO VIEW PROBLEM AS JAPAN-ASEAN CONFRONTATION. IN FACT, GOJ HAD THOUGHT AT FIRST IT WOULD APPROACH MALAYSIA DIRECTLY ON ISSUE; HOWEVER, SINCE MALAYSIA PREFERRED THAT ISSUE BE DISCUSSED BETWEEN JAPAN AND ASEAN, GOJ AGREED

TO USE OF ASEAN FORUM.

3. FONOFF VIEW, ACCORDING TO TAKANO, IS THAT SOME ASEAN MEMBERS HAD FELT THAT PRINCIPLE OF DIRECT ASEAN-JAPAN DISCUSSIONS (SUCH AS HAVE BEEN HELD BETWEEN ASEAN AND EC) WAS MORE IMPORTANT THAN SPECIFIC ISSUE OF RUBBER. WHILE GOJ HAS AGREED TO DIRECT DIALOG ON SYNTHETIC RUBBER, IT NOT WILLING ENLARGE DISCUSSION TO EMBRACE OTHER ISSUES.

4. GOJ AGREES WITH MALIK STATEMENT THAT MEETING CAME AT PROPITIOUS TIME. CLEARLY, IMPROVING COMPETITIVE POSITION OF AND PROSPECTS FOR NATURAL RUBBER, PARTICULARLY IN CONTEXT OF ENERGY CRISIS, MADE IT EASIER TO FIND SOLUTION SATISFACTORY TO ASEAN.

5. COMMENT: EMBASSY OFFICIALS OF ASEAN COUNTRIES IN TOKYO CLAIM THAT ASEAN COUNTRIES WIFO TO RESORT INCREASINGLY TO ASEAN-JAPAN CHANNEL RATHER THAN BI-LATERAL CHANNEL IN DISCUSSIONS ON VARIOUS ISSUES WITH GOJ. END COMMENT.

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Message Attributes

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Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 29 NOV 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
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Disposition Action: RELEASED
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Disposition Authority: worrelsw
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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Document Unique ID: 00
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Errors: N/A
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